

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-27 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1-4 and 8-13 being independent. Claims 1-4 and 8-13 have been amended and Claims 14-27 have been added herein.

Initially, Applicants respectfully request that the Form PTO-1449 provided with the Information Disclosure Statement filed October 29, 2001, be initialled and returned with the next correspondence. A copy of that form is included for the Examiner's convenience.

Claims 1-4 and 8-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 61-228975 (Morishita et al.) in view of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 11-348363 (Watabiki et al.). Claims 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in further view of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 11-277879 (Yamaoka). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Morishita et al. relates to a controller for feeding slip paper while avoiding printing on a perforation thereof. According to Applicants, Morishita et al. effects printing on a web-like sheet in which perforations are formed at constant intervals so that slips are formed when the sheet is cut along the perforations. The web-like sheet is accommodated in accommodating boxes 18, 19 in a folded state. The intact folded sheet is pulled out by discharge rollers 20, 22 and pinch rollers 21, 23.

However, Morishita et al. fails to disclose or suggest separating a print medium fed by feeding means from a stack of print media accommodated in an accommodating portion, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 4, 8, 12 and 13.

Nor does Morishita et al. disclose or suggest the dimensional advantages of the discard area, which can prevent the print medium from bending along a boundary between the print area and the discard area between the feeding means and the separation means. In particular, Morishita et al. does not disclose or suggest that a width of the discard area provided in the front end portion of the print medium is greater than a predetermined distance from the separation means to a contact portion of the print medium on which the feeding means contacts the print medium, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 4, 8, 12 and 13.

Morishita et al., which merely discloses perforations in the web-like sheet, does not disclose or suggest a separable discard area, the width of which provided in the front end portion of the print medium is greater than a predetermined distance from the rearmost effective printing portion of printing means to discharge means, as is recited in independent Claim 2, or the width of which in the rear end portion of the print medium is greater than the predetermined distance from the frontmost effective printing portion of the printing means to the transport means, as is recited in independent Claim 3.

Likewise, Morishita et al. does not disclose or suggest that a distance from a rearmost effective printing portion of the printing means to the discharge means is less than a width of the discard area provided in the front end portion of the print medium or that a distance from a frontmost effective printing portion of the printing means to the transport

means is less than a width of the discard area provided in the rear end portion of the print medium, as is recited in independent Claims 9, 10 and/or 11.

Further, Morishita et al. does not disclose or suggest that an image is formed which continues from a print area to a portion of a separable discard area, as is recited in independent Claims 3, 4, and 9-11.

Thus, Morishita et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 1-4 and 8-13.

Watabiki et al. relates to paper feed control in a dot printer using a stepping motor. Watabiki et al. can control paper feed speed of page skip. However, Watabiki et al. is not believed to remedy the deficiencies of Morishita et al. noted above with respect to independent Claims 1-4 and 8-13.

Yamaoka relates to a recording medium that can be separated into plural pieces. Waste areas for separation are provided outside the peripheries of the unit printing pieces. Applicants also submit that Yamaoka discloses printing beyond a perforation. However, Yamaoka is also not believed to remedy all of the deficiencies of the citations noted above with respect to independent Claims 1-4 and 8-13.

Thus, independent Claims 1-4 and 8-13 are patentable over the citations of record.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1-4 and 8-13. Dependent Claims 5-7 and 14-27 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present

invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Will", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Attorney for Applicants

Registration No. 33,628

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

MAW\mt

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Amendments in a Revised Format Now Permitted

Office of Patent Legal Administration << Pre-OG Notices << << Amendments in a Revised Format Now Permitted

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO or Office) is permitting applicants to submit amendments in a revised format as set forth herein. The revised amendment format is essentially the same as the amendment format that the Office is considering adopting via a revision to 37 CFR 1.121 (Manner of Making Amendments). The revision to 37 CFR 1.121 (if adopted) will simplify amendment submission and improve file management. The Office plans to adopt such a revision to 37 CFR 1.121 by July of 2003, at which point compliance with revised 37 CFR 1.121 will be mandatory.

The revised amendment format is an expansion of the special amendment process instituted for a prototype Electronic File Wrapper program described in USPTO ANNOUNCES PROTOTYPE OF IMAGE PROCESSING, 1265 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 87 (Dec. 17, 2002) ("Prototype Announcement"). The special amendment process (which was limited to claims) has proven overwhelmingly acceptable to applicants participating in the prototype and beneficial to examiners. The revised amendment format provides for amendments to be made to the specification and the drawings in addition to the claims.

Effective immediately, **all** applicants, including applicants participating in the prototype, may submit amendments using the revised amendment format set forth herein. Applicants may wish to submit all amendments in the revised amendment format because: (1) it will facilitate transition to a revised amendment format when it becomes mandatory, (2) inconsistent versions of claim amendments (clean and marked-up) will be avoided, and (3) time and resources will be saved.

WAIVER of 37 CFR 1.121

The provisions of 37 CFR 1.121(a), (b), (c) and (d) are waived for amendments to the **claims, specification, and drawings** in all applications in all Technology Centers where the amendments comply with the revised amendment format detailed below. Note: The revised amendment format (and the waiver) does **not** apply to 37 CFR 1.121(h) and (i) which indicate that amendments to reissue applications and reexamination proceedings are governed by 37 CFR 1.173 for reissue applications and 37 CFR 1.530 (d)-(k) for *ex parte* and *inter partes* reexaminations.

In addition, the WAIVER indicated in the above mentioned Prototype Announcement for the limited (claims only) amendment process of that prototype is also expressly continued and amendments in applications (other than reissue applications) in all Technology Centers that comply with the requirements in that announcement will be acceptable.

REVISED AMENDMENT FORMAT

I. Begin Sections on Separate Sheets:

Each section of an amendment paper (e.g., Amendments to the Specification, Amendments to the Claims, Remarks) shall begin on a separate sheet to facilitate separate indexing and electronic scanning of the document.

For example, each of the following four sections of an amendment paper must start on a separate sheet:

- a.) Introductory Comments

- b.) Amendments to the Specification
- c.) Amendments to the Claims
- d.) Remarks

II. Submit Only One Version (with markings) of an Amended Part:

The requirement to provide two versions of a replacement paragraph, section, or claim (a clean version and a marked up version), as set forth in current 37 CFR 1.121, is waived where the format set forth below is followed.

III. Amendments to the Claims

A. A Complete Listing of Claims is Always Required:

If an amendment adds, changes or deletes any claim, a detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remains under examination in the application, must be presented, and the amendment to the claims is expressed in the listing. The listing shall be presented as follows:

1. Ascending Order and Status Identifier Required

The listing shall be provided in sequential ascending numerical order (beginning with claim 1). A status identifier shall be provided for every claim in a parenthetical expression following the claim number (e.g., "Claim 1. (original)"). A list of acceptable status identifiers is set forth in part B, below. The text of **all** claims under examination shall be submitted each time any claim is amended. Cancelled and withdrawn claims should be indicated by only the claim number and status. The text of cancelled or withdrawn claims should not be presented.

2. Markings in Currently Amended Claims Required

All claims *being currently amended* shall be submitted with markings to indicate the changes that have been made relative to the immediate prior version of the claims. The changes in any amended claim should be shown by strikethrough (for deleted matter) or underlining (for added matter). No separate "clean" version should be submitted for currently amended claims, as this requirement has been eliminated. **Markings should only be made in claims being currently amended in an amendment paper.**

3. Only Clean Text Required for Other Claims Under Examination.

The text of pending claims *not being currently amended* that are under examination shall be presented in a clean version in the listing. Any claim presented in clean version constitutes an assertion that it has not been changed relative to the immediate prior version.

4. Status to Effect Claim Cancellation or Addition.

A claim may be cancelled by merely indicating the status of the claim as cancelled. Any new claim added by amendment must be indicated by the appropriate status identifier and shall not be underlined. Thus, added new claims of status (new), (reinstated - formerly claim #_) and (re-presented - formerly dependent claim #_) must be presented in clean version. Additional claims may be subject to additional fees, as appropriate.

5. When Grouping of Claims is Permitted.

Consecutive cancelled or withdrawn claims may be aggregated into one line of the listing (e.g. Claims 1 - 5 (cancelled)).

6. Use "Currently Amended" Status Where Applicable.

If any "previously reinstated" or "previously re-presented" claim is being amended, the status shall be indicated as "currently amended" with markings as indicated in paragraph A2, above. Multiple status identifiers should not be used for any single claim.

B. Status Identifiers that May be Used:

In order to promote uniformity and consistency, only the following eleven (11) defined status identifiers should be used to indicate the status of the claims (in parentheses after the claim number):

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. (Original): | Claim filed with the application following the specification (i.e., not added by preliminary amendment). |
| 2. (Currently amended): | Claim being amended in the current amendment paper. |
| 3. (Previously amended): | Claim not being currently amended, but which was amended in a previous amendment paper. |
| 4. (Cancelled): | Claim cancelled or deleted from the application. |
| 5. (Withdrawn): | Claim still in the application, but in a non-elected status. |
| 6. (Previously added): | Claim added in an earlier amendment paper. |
| 7. (New): | Claim being added in the current amendment paper. |
| 8. (Reinstated - formerly claim # _): | Claim deleted in an earlier amendment paper, but re-presented with a new claim number in current amendment. |
| 9. (Previously reinstated): | Claim deleted in an earlier amendment and reinstated in an earlier amendment paper. |
| 10. (Re-presented - formerly dependent claim # _): | Dependent claim re-presented in independent form in current amendment paper. |
| 11. (Previously re-presented): | Dependent claim re-presented in independent form in an earlier amendment, but not currently amended. |

C. Example of Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-5 (cancelled)
 Claim 6 (withdrawn)
 Claim 7 (previously amended): A bucket with a handle.
 Claim 8 (currently amended): A bucket with a ~~green~~ blue handle.
 Claim 9 (withdrawn)
 Claim 10 (original): A bucket with a wooden handle.
 Claim 11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (new): A bucket with plastic sides and bottom.

Claim 13 (previously added): A bucket having a circumferential upper lip.

Claim 14 (re-presented - formerly claim 11): A black bucket with a wooden handle.

IV. Amendments to the Specification

Amendments to the specification are to be made by presenting replacement paragraphs, sections or a substitute specification marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version, as set out in 37 CFR 1.121(b). The changes should be shown by strikethrough (for deleted matter) or underlining (for added matter). No accompanying "clean" version shall be supplied. The amendments to the specification shall be presented only one time, and will not appear in successive amendment documents.

V. Amendments to the Drawings

Amendments to the drawing figures shall be made by presenting replacement figures which include the desired changes, without markings, and which comply with § 1.84. The changes shall be explained in the accompanying remarks section of the amendment paper. If the amended drawings are not approved, the applicant will be notified in the next Office action. Any amended drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even though only one figure may be amended. The figure number in the amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended."

For further information on the prototype image electronic processing of patent applications, please contact the Search and Information Resources Administration at: image.processing@uspto.gov. Any questions regarding the submission of amendments pursuant to the revised practice set forth in this notice should be directed to Elizabeth Dougherty (Elizabeth.Dougherty@uspto.gov), Gena Jones (Eugenia.Jones@uspto.gov) or Joe Narcavage (<mailto:Joseph.Narcavage@uspto.gov>). For information on the waiver or legal aspects of the program, please contact Jay Lucas (Jay.Lucas@uspto.gov) or Rob Clarke (Robert.Clarke@uspto.gov).

Date: 1/31/03

Signed: /s/

STEVEN KUNIN
Deputy Commissioner for Patent
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